



Three times the charm: Siblings join the ranks of the Honors Program

Many students find their second family while at KU. Through honors classes, honors extracurricular activities and honors floors in residence halls, many of the 1,200 members of the University Honors Program, a part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, discover their KU kin in the program. For three honors students, the idea of an Honors Program family is more literal than usual.

Three siblings of the Krutty family are members of the Honors Program this year. Brittany Krutty, a senior in physics, Mark Krutty, a junior in mechanical engineering, and Jessica Krutty, a freshman in aerospace engineering, are all active in the academic program.

Kathleen McCluskey-Fawcett, director of the Honors Program, said that this is the first time three siblings have been in the Honors Program concurrently in recent memory. She said several families have had three siblings in the program eventually, but having three at the same time is rare.

Converging paths

The self-described close siblings pursue varied interests and activities, but still find ways to connect through their involvement at KU.

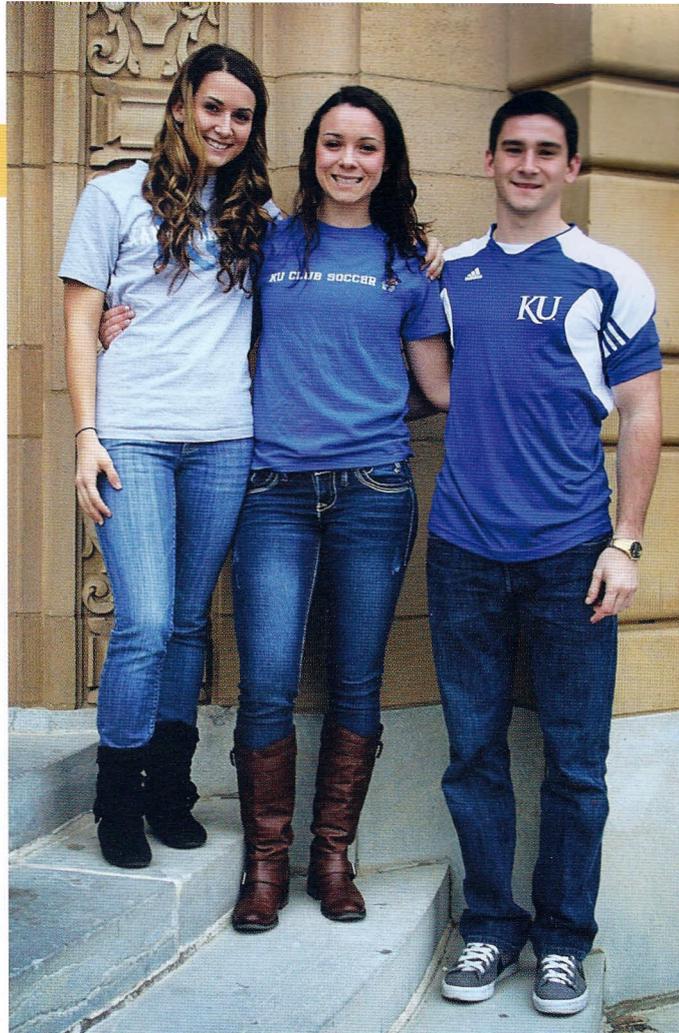
Brittany Krutty says her two focuses during her time at KU have been her research and her work with Habitat for Humanity. She has put in more than 400 hours a year volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, even serving as president of the organization at KU last year.

Since just after her freshman year, Brittany has conducted research with the nuclear physics research group at KU. Her research interests lay in lead-lead collisions with compact muon solenoid (CMS) experiments. This involvement has taken her across the world, traveling to Switzerland to work with CERN in Geneva twice, where she lived for more than a month.

Brittany says the Honors Program helped her obtain these opportunities through advising and assistance in applying for scholarships and grants. She should know; Brittany received a 2012 Goldwater Scholarship after applying through the Honors Program.

Mark has helped his sister Brittany with Habitat for Humanity work, but on campus he has focused on pioneering his own projects. He helped re-establish the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity chapter on KU's campus in 2012. He became a member of the Self Engineering Leadership Fellow (SELF) program, which gives exemplary engineering students mentoring, leadership and financial support.

Mark is not alone in the SELF program. Jessica, the newest Jayhawk of the Kruttys, was selected as one of the freshman fellows this year. She has followed in her siblings' footsteps in some respects, but she found her own niche in her first semester at KU. Jessica joined this year's successful KU Women's Club Soccer team; a team that won the regional tournament and traveled to the national competition in Nashville as one of the top 16 teams in the nation.



From left, Brittany, Jessica and Mark Krutty.

Jessica also worked with Engineers Without Borders, a student volunteer group open to all majors that uses engineering to aid communities around the world. When she signed up for a trip to work with Rebuild Joplin, Mo., she invited her sister Brittany along to share in the experience.

The Honors Program embraces the novelty of a set of three sibling members, but most values their contributions to the program and the university. Chris Wiles, associate director of the Honors Program, worked closely with Brittany on her Goldwater application and praised the scholastic accomplishments of all three Kruttys.

"They're all just extremely bright and well-rounded students. All three are in STEM fields and doing very well," Wiles said.